**Parent/Carer Invitation Letter**

Dear Parent/Carer,

My name is Leanne Burton and I am a researcher at the University of Liverpool. I am writing to you as we are working with Abbot’s Lea School as part of a research engagement opportunity for children and young people with learning disabilities to explore how we, as researchers, can best engage children in research about ‘healthy living’.

Your child has been identified by the school as a potential participant. The involvement opportunity would take place in the school setting, in school hours, and will involve completion of a basic questionnaire in a ‘workshop’ style setting with 3 or 4 other students, with the support of the researcher team and school staff. The aim of the study is to explore the design of the questionnaire and its questions and how appropriate they are to engage children with learning disabilities.

Participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw your child at any point. The study is completely anonymous; therefore, it does not require you to provide your child’s name or any other identifying information.

We have attached an information sheet outlining more information about the study. Enclosed is also an easy-read version for your child to look at. The ‘workshops will take place around one week after you receive this letter and supplementary information, giving you opportunity to read the information and ask any questions.

If you do not have any questions and are happy for your child to take part in this opportunity, you do not have to take any action. If you would like any further information, or would not like your child to take part, please contact the research team using the information below.

Your child’s participation in the involvement opportunity will be of great importance to assist us in shaping a wider study to into ‘healthy living’ informed the experiences of children and young people.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and information. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Kind Regards,

Dr Leanne Burton (PhD), University of Liverpool

Email: l.r.burton@liverpool.ac.uk

Telephone: 0151 795 7737

**Parent Information Sheet (Child Questionnaires)**

Version Number and Date: Version 1 09/02/2022

Lead Researcher: Dr Leanne Burton

Ethics Reference Number: 10962

Involving children and young people with learning disabilities in research – Questionnaire Workshops

Your child has been invited to take part in an opportunity conducted by the University of Liverpool. Before you decide whether you wish your child to participate, it is important for you to understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read through the following information carefully, and ask questions if you require more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. Please also feel free to discuss this with friends, or relatives if you wish. We would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want your child to.

**What is the purpose of this project?**

The aim of the project is to explore the best ways to engage children and young people with learning disabilities in research. This is an opportunity to shape a wider research study looking at how we can support children and young people tackle overweight and obesity in the learning disability population, from the experiences of children. We hope that input directly from children and young people will help us to understand the best language to use and what might encourage their involvement in future research.

**Why has my child been chosen?**

We are asking your child to take part as they have been identified as a potential participant by the school.

**Do they have to take part?**

No - participation is entirely voluntary. There will be no consequences or disadvantages for not participating.

**What will happen if they take part?**

Participation involves taking part in a ‘workshop’ with 3 or 4 other pupils and completion of a questionnaire. The workshop will be organised within school hours and on school premises, with teachers and the lead researcher present. The workshop will last between 30-45 minutes.

The workshop will involve the lead researcher introducing themselves and the research, ensuring that the children understand the project and are happy to take part. This will be facilitated by teaching staff where necessary.

Participants will then be asked to complete the questionnaire to the best of their ability. The research staff will observe reactions to the questionnaire and questions, including the design, the language used and completion rates/time. Assistance will be given with question understanding where necessary. A second researcher will be present to take notes during this time.

Participation is voluntary and anonymous.

**Are there any risks in taking part?**

We do not anticipate any risks to taking part in this patient and participant involvement opportunity.

**Are there any benefits in taking part?**

The results from this project will help us to shape the design of a wider research study based on what parents/carers and children and young people want the research to look like and what will help them best to be involved in the study.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results will be distributed in easy-read format to all participants so they can see how their input helped the study. We hope to also write up what we have found to publish in an academic journal. Additionally, we may hold a launch event to demonstrate the importance of your input into the shaping of the study design.

**What will happen if they want to stop taking part or I want them to stop?**

You are free to withdraw your child’s participation at any point during the study without any explanation or consequences. However, once your child has completed the questionnaire and returned it to the research team, it will not be possible to withdraw.

The research team will check your child’s understanding of the questionnaire before they take part and will ensure they are aware they do not have to complete any questions they do not wish to and can stop at any point.

**What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?**

If you are unhappy, or if there are any problems, please contact Dr Leanne Burton (0151 795 7737) in the first instance. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot address Dr Leanne Burton, please contact the Research Ethics and Integrity Office at ethics@liv.ac.uk. When contacting the Research Ethics and Integrity Office, please include details of the name or description of the study (found at the top of this information sheet), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

**Who can I contact if I have further questions?**

Please do not hesitate and feel free to contact any of our researchers if you wish to ask any further questions.

Names of research team members: Dr Leanne Burton and Miss Abbie Wall

Principal Investigator: Dr Leanne Burton – 0151 795 7737

Thank you again for taking the time to read through this information sheet and for considering the request for your child to take part in this project.